

## Fairfax Center Phase II Working Group

Meeting Minutes

August 31, 2016

### Attendance

Working Group: Jeff Parnes, Sherry Fisher, Vince Picciano, Mark McConn, Jeff Saxe, Robbie Stark

Staff: Ken Sorenson, Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning (FCDPZ); Meghan Van Dam, FCDPZ; Marcia Pape, Braddock District office; Laura Floyd, Sully District Office

Guests: Martin Rizer, K. Hovnanian; Paul Zhu, Pender Professional Center; Aristotelis Chronis, Chronis Law; Frank McDermott, Hunton & Williams; Susan Yantis, Hunton & Williams

### Administrative Matters

Vince Picciano, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. The working group deferred the approval of the July 21, 2016 minutes to the September 19, 2016 meeting to allow more review time.

### Pender Professional Center ([Submission SS2](#)) Impact Analysis – Presentation

Ken Sorenson, DPZ, presented the results of the impact analysis to the working group. After the presentation which identified a planned focal point for the community, the group asked what type of focal point is planned. Jeff Saxe remarked that the 15 foot buffer against the electrical substation adjacent to the subject area would not be sufficient for future residential development. Martin Rizer, K. Hovnanian, responded that special attention would be paid to addressing the buffer as it effects the market viability of the units. The working group agreed that additional thought needs to be given to augmenting the buffer for the electrical substation. Jeff Saxe asked Martin Rizer if he prefers the first or second development option. Martin Rizer responded that the first option is the initial development, but that the second option is the long-term plan.

Robbie Stark asked staff for its position. Meghan Van Dam, DPZ, replied that the phasing approach is more compatible than previous iterations, and that the second phase has the benefit of opening up the subject area to the adjacent shopping center. However, staff would like to hear the working group's thoughts on the newest concepts and results of the impacts analysis. Jeff Parnes asked what phase the working group is in the process with respect to this proposal. Staff replied that the impact analysis has been presented to the working group and that they may make a recommendation based on those results. Martin Rizer volunteered some of the benefits of the project, not limited to improved open space, maintenance of existing buffers to adjacent neighborhood, adjacency to transit and shopping, and a high-end product. Aristotelis Chronis remarked that it was his impression that the working group was in support of the plans. The working group discussed what was decided at the prior meeting and came to the conclusion that the group recommended that staff study the impacts for Phases 1 and 2, and not to study the impacts of Phase 2b. Jeff Parnes made a motion to recommend approval of Phase 1 as a short-term scenario, and Phase 2 as the long-term scenario. Motion was seconded and approved.

## Revised Merrifield Garden Center Proposal ([PA 2016-III-FC1](#)) – Presentation

Frank McDermott, Hunton & Williams, presented the revised proposal for the subject property: a fully residential scenario and an alternative scenario for independent and assisted living, both of which would be 12 dwelling units to the acre (du/ac). Frank presented a zoning exhibit showing all rezonings approved in Dix-Cen-Gato consolidation. Frank mentioned that at a previous meeting at which this subject property was considered, the working group talked about the Plan language that recommended tapering down the density toward Lee Highway. Frank also mention the past discussion, in which the working group discussed equitability since the subject property was not part of the original consolidation, and didn't make infrastructure contributions. Frank presented an exhibit which showed how C-5, by-right density on the subject property would develop along Lee Highway, he noted that there would be commercial access onto the Highway.

Frank reviewed the original proposal, which was stacked and conventional townhouses at 12 du/ac and noted that the land use and density type are consistent with the adjacent neighborhood. Also, that the density would be in conformance with tapering language recommended in the Plan, with densities in the area ranging from 33-10 du/ac. Frank returned to the proposal noting that the assisted living scenario has townhouses as buffers to the existing townhouses to the north. The all-residential proposal is for 10 du/ac and the assisted/independent living scenario is 12 du/ac, or .70 FAR. Frank said the property owner is committed to having language in the Plan with provisions for pro rata contributions to parks and schools similar to Dix-Cen-Gato contributions.

Vince Picciano asked the working group whether an impact analysis should be conducted. Frank mentioned that there will be approximately 232 residents with parks and recreational needs, and that there is a precedent for contribution to off-site parks. This proposal would also provide an opportunity for a green corridor to the Fair Oaks Church property. Jeff Parnes stated that his preference is for the assisted/independent living scenario, which would bring a good use to the neighborhood. Jeff Saxe remarked that he would rather not see future strip commercial development along Route 29, and that he prefers the assisted/independent living scenario but would also be comfortable with townhouses at 10 du/ac if they are willing to contribute on a pro rata basis what Dix-Cen-Gato contributed per unit. Jeff stated that he doesn't see a need for an impact analysis since there are probably less impacts with an assisted/independent living facility. Sherry Fisher prefers the townhouse scenario but recused herself and wonders if the County is going overboard with assisted living. Robbie Stark commented that he is fine with both scenarios as they would prevent commercial development along Route 29. Mark McConn asked what impact these scenarios would have on the fire station. Frank replied that there should be none since the fire department controls access. Jeff Saxe made a motion that would overrule the previous motion recommending 8 du.ac. The new motion recommended that maximum density be raised to 10 du/ac for all residential projects with a commensurate contribution similar to Dix-Cen-Gato. The second part of the motion is for purposes of allowing assisted/independent only at 12 du/ac or similar FAR. The motion was seconded by Robbie Stark and approved by the working group with Sherry Fisher recusing herself.

### Area-wide Guidance - Development Elements

Meghan Van Dam provided three items for review: a clean copy of current Plan text, a working draft matrix of the Development Elements, and revised Area Wide Guidance. The working group's comments were included in these documents. Meghan asked Robbie Stark to provide his language regarding open space. Meghan began reviewing the Development Elements and their function as implementation tools for Fairfax Center Area as an incentive-based system that both county and developers benefit from the structure. The development elements are broken down into basic, minor, and major elements on page 8. Additional infrastructure or amenities above the basic elements ensure a proportional increase in the quality of the development as a quantifiable process. This was an innovative system in the 80s, as it presented a sound negotiation process. Current negotiation practices are more sophisticated, and this system is no longer deemed as useful since many county policies have superseded the need for area-specific guidance and to update the development elements based on countywide policies would be excessive and ultimately duplicative.

Next, the group reviewed the matrix of development elements. Meghan, noted that the right column of the matrix indicated if an element was already in areawide guidance. Jeff Parnes highlighted the term "extraordinary innovation", noting that it may be superfluous. Staff replied that they would consider different language to express the desire for innovative development. Jeff Saxe summarized the discussions, explaining that staff is proposing getting rid of development levels and embedding them into the area-wide guidance. Meghan reviewed some of the proposed guidance based on the development elements. Page 36 discusses parking lighting and was pulled from the Reston Plan. Green building ideas are on page 43 but will be reviewed by our environmental planner. Staff is still discussing storm water guidance as the storm water planners have suggested that the policies should be altered to bring standards into modern practices.

Meghan continued with Heritage Resources on pages 43-46, which describe additional heritage resource sites within the area. Page 46 looked at the provision of public facilities in the development process. The opportunity is not always there for larger public facilities, especially with redevelopment and infill sites. In other areas, school planners have asked for other types of mitigation strategies. School capacity changes can be mitigated through other in-kind strategies. The language for these types of facilities was taken from the Seven Corners Plan, and the County is beginning to take these types of policies to other areas. Many County policies have superseded the 30 years-old development elements. So far the working group has talked about the reuse of office space for museums and staff is looking to address some of these issues on a County-wide basis with the next work program.

The group agreed to provide any comments to staff by September 9, 2016.

### Next Meeting

The group agreed to the next meeting for September 19, 2016. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.